



Risk Factors for Heart Disease

Watch Out for These!

High blood pressure

When this happens, the heart has to pump harder than it should to push blood through the circulatory system. The condition has no warning signals, which is why everyone should have their blood pressure checked regularly. Sometimes high blood pressure can be reduced by increasing physical activity, making healthy food choices and losing weight. Other times, prescription medicine is required.

High cholesterol This condition is usually caused by eating foods high in saturated fats, trans fats and cholesterol. It can usually be treated by changing the foods you eat and getting more exercise. Other times, prescription medicine is required.

Smoking Cigarettes are extremely harmful to your body. They can cause cancer, emphysema and heart disease. The smoke from cigarettes pollutes your lungs and causes fatty buildups in your arteries, making it hard for blood to flow to all the organs.

Physical inactivity Lack of physical activity increases the risk for heart disease. It can also cause high cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity and diabetes. Regular physical activity strengthens your heart and also helps you control your weight.

Overweight Being overweight increases the risk of heart disease and raises blood cholesterol and blood pressure, and it increases the risk of diabetes. Balancing calories taken in from food with calories used in activity is the best way to control your weight.

Diabetes Insulin is a hormone that helps the body use sugar. Diabetes is a disease that develops when the body can't efficiently process the sugar you eat, making your blood sugar levels too high. Sometimes diabetes can be managed with diet and physical activity. Other times, prescription medicine is required.

